



# AETC News Clips

## Randolph AFB, Texas



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### **Gulf bases assess storm damage**

**By Lolita C. Baldor**

*Associated Press*

Widespread flooding and high winds from Hurricane Katrina damaged Air Force bases in Florida and Mississippi and other military services were still trying Tuesday to assess how much damage had been done at facilities across the storm-wracked region.

Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., suffered extensive damage to base housing, training facilities and industrial areas from raging flood waters that were up to four feet deep. Flooding and downed trees also battered buildings at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla. There were no injuries reported at either base.

Army officials were en route to Camp Shelby, Miss., where power had been knocked out, and fallen trees and flooding had done some damage. The base was not evacuated, and there were no early reports of injuries.

First U.S. Army, based at Fort Gillem near Atlanta, has already received some requests from state officials and the Federal Emergency Management Agency for aircraft to conduct search and rescue missions and assessment flights over the region.

Navy officials were still evaluating the damage to bases and facilities in the area, including Pensacola Naval Air Station, Fla., and Naval Station Pascagoula, Miss. Two Navy frigates were moved from Pascagoula before the storm hit, and were still out at sea.

*Air Force Times Daily News*  
**Roundup**  
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### **Air Force says pilot error caused fatal helicopter crash**

08/27/2005

Associated Press

Pilot error caused an Air Force helicopter crash near Angel Fire that killed one crew member, Air Force investigators said.

Maj. Larry J. Ouellette flew too low and lost control of the HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter on May 11, the Air Education and Training Command at Randolph Air Force Base in Texas said in a news release Friday.

Bad weather and a general complacency among the three-member crew contributed to the crash, according to an investigation by Brig. Gen. Mark S. Solo of the 97th Air Mobility Wing at Altus Air Force Base in Oklahoma.

Tech. Sgt. Scott Bobbitt, 38, was killed in the crash. The Memphis, Texas, native was the aircraft's flight engineer. He was thrown from the helicopter as it crashed and burned on a small knoll on National Vietnam Memorial property. The flight was to have been one of Bobbitt's last in uniform.

Ouellette and his co-pilot, Capt. John M. De Sir, suffered minor injuries in the crash.

The three crew members were stationed at Kirtland Air Force Base with the 512th Rescue Unit of the 58th Special Operations Wing.

They were on a high altitude training mission when the crash occurred.

*San Antonio Express News*

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### **Judge halts Guard base closure recommendation**

**By Susan Haigh**

*Associated Press*

HARTFORD, Conn. — A federal judge temporarily halted the national base closings commission from recommending a realignment of a Connecticut Air National Guard base, which the governor contends cannot be done without her approval.

U.S. District Judge Alfred V. Covello issued a temporary restraining order and scheduled a hearing Sept. 7 on the Base Closure and Realignment Commission's recommendation to remove planes from Bradley International Airport.

The commission approved the plan last week and has until Sept. 8 to forward its recommendations to President Bush.

"This order assures that the BRAC commission will not be sent to the president before the court rules on our lawsuit's request for a hearing," Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal said. "Our reason for seeking this order was to assure that the court has a full opportunity to consider our arguments before Connecticut may be threatened with the very substantial irreparable harm of this realignment."

Calls were left seeking comment with the BRAC commission and Gov. M. Jodi Rell.

The governor and three congressmen sued the base closings commission and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on Monday, saying that as the Connecticut Guard's commander in chief, Rell must consent to any realignment of the case.

The Pentagon plans to move nine of the 17 A-10 Thunderbolts from the 103rd Fighter Wing located at Bradley and retire the rest. The realignment is part of the Pentagon's proposal to shut or consolidate 62 major U.S. military bases and hundreds of smaller facilities.

Last week, a federal judge ruled in favor of Pennsylvania's governor, who argued the Defense Department needs his approval to dissolve an Air National Guard division there.

Rell is the lead plaintiff in the Connecticut case. She is joined by Democratic Sens. Christopher Dodd and Joseph Lieberman, and Rep. John Larson, D-Conn.

*San Antonio Express News*

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### New boss selected for AF academy

Bush picks the chief  
of Air University at  
Maxwell AFB, Ala.

— ♦ —  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

AIR FORCE ACADEMY,  
Colo. — President Bush nom-  
inated a new superintendent  
of the Air Force Academy on  
Tuesday

*Rosa is  
stepping  
down to  
become  
president of  
The Citadel,  
in  
Charleston,  
S.C.*

as the  
presti-  
gious  
school  
works to  
recover  
from scan-  
dals over  
sexual as-  
saults and  
religious  
intoler-  
ance.  
Lt. Gen.  
John

Regni, who has been com-  
mander of the Air University  
at Maxwell AFB, Ala., will  
replace Lt. Gen. John Rosa  
Jr.

Regni's appointment must  
be approved by the Senate.

Rosa is stepping down to  
become president of The Ci-  
tadel, the private military  
college in Charleston, S.C.

Dozens of female cadets  
have said they were pun-  
ished or forced to resign after  
reporting they were sexually  
assaulted. The allegations led  
to a complete change in the  
school's command structure  
that put Rosa in charge.

This week, the Air Force  
issued new guidelines on re-  
ligious tolerance after com-  
plaints that evangelical  
Christian staffers and cadets  
at the academy near Col-  
orado Springs had harassed  
students of other faiths.

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September 05, 2005

### **Simulator gives preview of night-vision goggles** Upgrades training for F-16 student pilots

By [Laura M. Colarusso](#)

*Times staff writer*

An upgrade to F-16 simulators will give students a 360-degree nighttime view — in color.

The enhanced simulators are used by the 310th Fighter Squadron, Luke Air Force Base, Ariz., to teach F-16 student pilots the aircraft's night systems.

"It's going to allow the students to see" what flying is like with night-vision goggles "before they have to fly the jet with" them, said Capt. Mike Rasbach, the squadron's flying course manager.

With the upgraded program, students can "train like they fight in a simulator," he said.

Other officials at Luke also praised the new system.

Integrating the night-vision goggle simulation system with the current F-16 simulators "has greatly increased the flight safety and mission effectiveness of F-16 pilots," Maj. Jonathan Beasley, program manager for the Networked Training Center at Luke, said in a written statement. "This provides us with the highest fidelity F-16 full-mission training system for day, night and all-weather operations."

Brad Morrow, account manager for Defense Department sales for Silicon Graphics Inc., one of the companies involved in the project, agreed the upgrades are important for the safety of the pilots.

"For F-16 pilots, there's never been NVG simulation before, so pilots in the past have trained in a single-seat aircraft by taking off and getting to altitude and putting on the goggles," Morrow said. "It doesn't allow them to train to the limits because they have to be safer."

"Over the last few years we've lost several aircraft and pilots," Morrow said. "This will provide an environment that's risk free to the pilot."

That's important because when pilots wear the NVGs, their depth perception is thrown off and their field of vision through the goggles is cut to about 40 degrees, forcing them to continually turn their heads to



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see what they could normally view with their peripheral vision. The pilots can look around the goggles to see peripherally, but then their field of view isn't illuminated.

Pilots who undergo training with the old system use a unit training device, or a cockpit with a 3-foot flat projection screen. They get in and "just turn off the lights" to practice flying at night, Rasbach said.

### **New software, hardware**

The upgrades to the system will come in the form of new software and some new hardware, according Morrow. SGI teamed with Lockheed Martin, which operates and maintains the simulators, and Multi-Gen Paradigm, a software company, to complete the project.

Morrow described the goggles as "very realistic from a size and a weight" standpoint. But, instead of having night-vision optics, they are essentially small television screens that display the terrain as pilots look into them.

"They look like real goggles," Morrow said.

And, the graphics and imagery that are piped into the goggles were programmed to be as realistic as possible, Morrow added.

In fact, the three-dimensional graphics are so good they incorporate visual effects such as lunar shading, Beasley said.

The upgrades will allow pilot trainees to practice within a range of nighttime environments, according to Rasbach. During the four-week flying course, they might not otherwise get a chance to fly at night with little or no moonlight.

Student pilots haven't started to use the new training tools yet, Rasbach said. They might get to use the new system within a month, but it is still being tested and tweaked.



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September 05, 2005

### Demoted senior airman loses bid to stay in service

**By Nicole Gaudiano**

*Times staff writer*

Senior Airman Jennifer Jones' last hope for remaining in the Air Force was lost when the acting judge advocate general declined to suspend her sentence to a reduction in grade.

Jones, who has been outspoken in her fight for equality among airmen in the eyes of military justice, will separate from the service Sept. 23.

The former staff sergeant and instructor at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, was demoted to senior airman Feb. 7 after pleading guilty to having a monthlong unprofessional relationship and disobeying a no-contact order with a senior airman student in her Aerospace Medical Service Apprentice course.

From the beginning, Jones has questioned why her case went to court-martial when the case of former TJAG Thomas J. Fiscus did not. The retired Fiscus received nonjudicial punishment for his misconduct with multiple women and was demoted from major general to colonel.

Jones said she wouldn't have a problem with her career being ruined if Fiscus and other higher-ranking officers had been treated the same. No Air Force general officer has ever been court-martialed.

"Don't keep telling me each case stands on its own merit," she said. "[Military justice] is serving particular people well, but it's not serving everybody well."

Jones' sentence to a reprimand, \$1,000 fine and demotion would have allowed her to stay in the Air Force, but the rules of high-year tenure preclude her from remaining on active duty any longer as a senior airman.

Senior leadership apparently intervened in her case, offering a waiver of those rules, according to her lawyer's April 14 appeal to acting TJAG Maj. Gen. Jack Rives.

An Air Force spokesman, without identifying the senior leaders, said they were sympathetic to the fact that the limitation stood in the way of her testing to get her stripe back.

She declined the offer after serious deliberation because of her "dire financial straits" after having her income cut by more than \$600 per month, the appeal stated.

On July 25, the director of the Air Force Judiciary, responding for Rives, wrote that she found the approved sentence appropriate and denied relief.

Since the court-martial, Jones said she found work at an Alabama car plant near her parents' home, but she can't take the job. Her ex-husband is suing for custody of their two children and the social worker's report to the judge recommends she remain in Wichita Falls, Texas, near the father, she said.

The \$4,000 bill for a family law attorney to defend her interests in the custody battle has wiped out her savings.

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A burglar broke into her home in July, stealing her laptop and some jewelry. But at least the insurance money is helping to pay the mounting bills, she said.

Jones had hoped to pursue her fight against what she calls a “double standard” in military justice with Alabama Republican Sens. Jeff Sessions and Richard C. Shelby, but both offices declined to intervene, she said.

She believes that if enough people would complain about the disparity, “they would have to fix it.”

“But in this case, one person’s just not enough,” she said.





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September 05, 2005

### Cutting the list

New way of handling moves would kill Vulnerable to Move

By [Rod Hafemeister](#)

*Times staff writer*

SAN ANTONIO — Assignment officials are testing a radically different way of deciding where and when officers make a permanent change-of-station move.

If it works, officers' assignments will no longer be driven by how long they have been on station. Instead, assignments will be closely tied to career development plans and Air Force requirements. And gone would be the Vulnerable to Move List, which comes out three times a year.

"The VML just does not make sense in the force development world," said Col. Lee Hall, director of assignments at the Air Force Personnel Center. "In a force development construct, where potentially you are developing people along different career paths, does it make sense to move everybody at 3½ years just because you're on the Vulnerable to Move List?"

Hall said officials want to see if it's possible to move away from the "push" system of the VML to a requirements-driven "pull" system based on force development goals.

Effective with the assignment cycle that begins Sept. 15, civil engineers (32E) and rated officers in the special operations fields are off the VML for moves scheduled for next summer.

Instead, PCS assignments for those groups will be based on development plans and Air Force needs, regardless of how long an individual officer has been on station.

The plan: When a requirement comes up, assign the right officer, not just the guy at the top of the list.

Officers in the selected career fields already have been briefed to update their Transitional Officer Development Plans, or T-DOPs, to reflect their goals, Hall said.

The two career areas were chosen because officials wanted a rated field and a nonrated field that were not too large, and that had development teams that were sufficiently advanced in the process to make it realistic.

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“We’ll run it at least through the summer VML to see if we can get people their orders quicker for school,” Hall said. “Last year, we weren’t getting people assignments until April or May for schools starting in June.”

Ideally, officers would be sent to the Air Command and Staff College or the Air Force Institute of Technology knowing what follow-on assignment they were going to that would make use of their schooling.

But Hall warned that officers shouldn’t expect such a system to encourage homesteading at a base. PCS moves would still happen — they just would be driven by when it’s the right time.

The VML grew out of the Air Force’s less-than-successful experiment in the early 1990s with making all assignments voluntary as an aid to retention.

The problem was some assignments simply were not desirable — and never had enough volunteers. The Air Force went to an assignment system that allows officers to state their preferences, but ultimately makes assignments based on Air Force needs.

The VML was created to alert commanders which officers were considered eligible for a PCS. Who was at the top of the VML was based on who had been on station the longest.

“Over the years, it’s kind of morphed, as these things tend to do. And nowadays, it’s become almost a mandatory mover list,” Hall said. “It generates a lot of, to my mind, unnecessary movement and a lot of assignments that probably weren’t even necessary.”

Force development, rolled out as a concept in late 2002, takes a different approach. No longer would everyone live under the illusion that they had an equal chance to become chief of staff or four-star general — or that they were required to have that as a goal.

Instead, an officer should be able to say he wants command, or wants to stay in the cockpit or on the flight line. Commanders are supposed to provide guidance and realistic feedback on the officer’s potential.

Key to the process are the development teams, organized by career field and tasked to suggest the right people for the right jobs.



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These teams are supposed to take the long view — not just what assignment someone should have next, but what assignments are necessary to prepare that airman for later assignments and responsibilities.

Officials point out that it's really about multiple possible career tracks, with some officers heading for high-level command, some becoming experts in a given field and some becoming experienced generalists, able to meld together a broader variety of experiences.

Whether the assignment process will change depends on the test and the other factors affecting officers, including plans to reduce the officer force by about 4,000 people.

"We're very sensitive about doing away with the VML because there's lots and lots of turbulence right now in the personnel field," Hall said. "The VML works; it's not broken."

"We might decide we don't need to get rid of the VML right now. After the test, we might push it down, kick the can for a year or two."



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### **Blue no more**

Incentives increase for officers to leave early

By [Rod Hafemeister](#)

*Times staff writer*

SAN ANTONIO — Air Force leaders trying to reduce the number of active-duty officers are offering another incentive for them to consider leaving voluntarily: waiving the requirement for most officers to repay their education costs.

And, in a move similar to the cut in enlisted recruits in fiscal 2005, officials are offering Reserve Officer Training Corps cadets scheduled for commissioning in fiscal 2006 options that don't require entering active duty or require repaying education costs, including ROTC scholarships.

There also is the possibility of involuntary reductions in certain over-strength officer career fields, especially for captains and lieutenants, if not enough volunteers decide to leave.

"All options are still on the table," said Lt. Col. Scott Brady, chief of retirements and separations on the Air Staff. "Certainly, we want to meet the goals of reducing our officer levels by voluntary methods as much as we can.

"But nothing is off the table at this point. We're still looking at the involuntary reduction as an option. We're viewing a lot of things at this point."

The goal is to reduce the officer force by about 4,000 by the end of fiscal 2006. Previous incentive programs, and an almost 47 percent cut in enlisted recruits for fiscal 2005, took the service under its active-duty end-strength cap of 359,000 by July. But the fiscal 2006 cap is 357,400; officials say that while the enlisted force is small enough to meet that requirement, there are still too many officers.

Officer-force reductions are likely to continue into fiscal 2007, Brady said, echoing a statement by Brig. Gen. Glenn F. Spears, Air Force director of force management policy.

"We will continue our force shaping efforts until the proper balance and skill mixture is achieved," Spears said in a prepared release.

The new options are included in Force Shaping Phase II Message 8, released Aug. 24, barely a month after Message 7, which closed the door on most enlisted early-outs. The message, as well as other force

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shaping information, is available on the Air Force Personnel Center Web site at:

*[www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/retseplshape2.htm](http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/retseplshape2.htm)*.

The biggest change is a decision to let many officers leave active duty without repaying education costs.

"It widens the aperture on who exactly could get educational costs waived," Brady said.

"The hope is that we're going to get a number of voluntary separations out of this. Once Lt. Jones or soon-to-be Lt. Jones realizes that they can separate without having their education costs recouped, we hope that's going to be an incentive."

Education costs will be waived for officers who transfer to the Air Guard or Air Force Reserve under the Palace Chase program or for officers transferring to the Army under the Blue-to-Green program. Both waivers were instituted in December, but were suspended by the July message.

The new education-costs waiver is for officers who separate from the service under the Limited Active Duty Service Commitment waiver program. The policy waives education costs associated with service academy graduation, ROTC scholarships, the Air Force Institute of Technology, and tuition assistance. An officer can request early separation from the Air Force without paying back thousands or even tens of thousands of dollars spent on education.

While the policy allows most AFSCs to apply for the programs, in practice, officers in certain career fields — those that are undermanned or are short in the officer's paygrade — may find it hard to get approval.

Officers below the rank of colonel in several career fields are not eligible for the LDASC program, including 13XX, 61SXA, 61SXD, 62EX and Biomedical Sciences, Medical, Dental and Nurse Corps officers, as well as 11XX and 12XX officers with less than 15 years of commissioned service.

And engineering specialties in most of the 62EX career fields will have to repay their education costs if approved under Palace Chase.

Palace Chase and Blue-to-Green transferees also get waivers of repaying most unearned bonuses, except aviator continuation pay, judge advocate continuation pay and critical skills retention bonuses.



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Also included are options for ROTC cadets, who normally start on active duty, to be commissioned into the Guard or Reserve or into the Army. There's also an option for cadets to leave ROTC, with an option to enlist in the Army if approved. Except for disenrollment, the ROTC options apply only to cadets scheduled for commissioning in fiscal 2006.

Exceptions are for cadets pursuing technical degrees that are in short supply, including engineering, meteorology, math and nursing, and former enlisted airmen who are cadets under the Airmen Education Commissioning Program.

Cadets, including the scholarship students, will not be required to repay their education costs.

"A common theme through all the messages is, 'These voluntary measures are still out there,'" Brady said.

"Whether that's Blue-to-Green, whether that's going to one of our Reserve components or whether that's applying for civil service employment, those are all viable options that these young officers can take."

### **Ways to leave**

Time in grade

Colonels and lieutenant colonels may retire at current rank with two years time in grade instead of three. The policy continues through fiscal 2006.

Palace Chase

This program allows transfer to the Air National Guard or Air Force Reserve.

- **Who's eligible:** Officers in most fields, Air Force Academy graduates.
- **Exclusions:** Biomedical Sciences, Medical Service, Dental Corps and Nurse Corps, those still doing initial skills training, those scheduled to retrain.
- **Requirements:** For Reserve, 2-for-1 service commitment. For Guard, four-year service commitment.
- **Bonuses:** You are relieved of repaying unearned portions of bonuses. Repaying will be deferred and eventually waived on completing obligation.
- **Exceptions:** Aviation continuation pay, judge advocate continuation pay or critical skills retention bonus.
- **Education costs:** Will not be repaid for academy graduation, Reserve Officer Training Corps scholarships, Air Force Institute of Technology and tuition assistance.

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- **Exclusions:** These AFSCs must repay unearned portions of education costs:

62EXA aeronautical.

62EXB astronautical.

62EXC computer science.

62EXE electrical/electronic.

62EXF flight test.

62EXH mechanical.

ROTC cadets

Cadets to be commissioned in fiscal 2006 may transfer to Air Reserve, Air Guard or Army and disenroll from ROTC.

**Exclusions:** Some engineering, meteorology, math, nursing programs and academic specialties.

- **Education costs:** Cadets won't have to repay.

Limited Active-Duty Service Commitment Waivers

- **Who's eligible:** Officers in almost all AFSCs.

• **To apply:** The 120-day minimum application requirement for terminal leave or permissive temporary duty is waived.

- **Requirement:** Fulfill military service obligation in Individual Ready Reserve.

• **Waivers:** May be approved for ADSCs incurred for permanent changes of station, education programs, tuition assistance, service academy, Officer Training School, ROTC or direct commission.

- **Exclusions:** Lieutenant colonels and below in these following specialties:

13XX space, missile, command and control.

61SXA analytical.

61SXD physicist.

62EX developmental engineering.

Biomedical Sciences, Medical, Dental and Nurse Corps specialties.

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11XX pilot and 12XX navigator with less than 15 years commissioned service.

- **Bonuses:** Repayment of bonuses is required.
- **Education costs:** Will not be repaid.

Blue-to-Green

Grades O-1 through O-3 and E-1 through E-5 may transfer to the Army.

- **Education costs:** Will not be recouped
- **Bonuses:** Unearned portions will not be recouped. Exclusions: aviation continuation pay, judge advocate continuation pay and critical skills retention bonuses.





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## Altus AFB, Okla.



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## A promotion and a new assignment



**Altus AFB photo**

Altus Air Force Base commander, Mark S. Solo, was set to be promoted to brigadier general at 1 p.m. today at the Freedom Community Center in a private ceremony. Solo has been selected for reassignment as chief of the U.S. Office of Military Cooperation in Kuwait. His departure date has not been determined.